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U.S., TWO CORPORATIONS AGREE ON \$90 MILLION SOIL CLEANUP AT TOMS RIVER SUPERFUND SITE IN NEW JERSEY

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Ciba Specialty Chemicals Corporation and Novartis Corporation have agreed to perform soil clean up at one of New Jersey's Superfund sites under an agreement reached today with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Justice Department.

The Ciba-Giegy Superfund site in Toms River, NJ, will undergo a cleanup project estimated at over \$90 million under a consent decree lodged today in U.S. District Court in Newark. The two corporations will also reimburse the EPA \$250,000 for its past costs associated with the soil cleanup project. The company already has spent an estimated \$60 million on activities related to groundwater cleanup at the Site, and has already reimbursed EPA almost \$12 million.

"This settlement shows that we can resolve environmental lawsuits in ways that benefit not just the environment but the communities that have been affected by the sloppy waste disposal practices of the past," said John Cruden, Acting Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division.

"This agreement is the culmination of years of hard work and cooperation between EPA, the Toms River community and the company," said William J. Muszynski, EPA Acting Regional Administrator. "We still have a lot of work ahead of us to eliminate the causes of the ground water contamination at the facility, and this consent decree is a necessary step in that direction. We're pleased that CIBA has taken responsibility for the cleanup of its site, and expect our production relationship with the company to continue as we enter one of the most important phases of the work."

Under EPA oversight, the corporations have agreed to treat or dispose of approximately 150,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil and over 30,000 drums of contaminated hazardous and solid waste. They have also agreed to install caps and barrier walls in the subsurface to prevent movement of contaminants into groundwater, and perform future monitoring at the Site to ensure the effectiveness of the cleanup.

The Toms River Site is an approximate 1400 acre parcel, 320 acres of which were developed and used for the manufacture of various chemicals beginning in 1952 by the Toms River Chemical Company. Toms River Chemical Company was later merged into Ciba-Geigy Corporation. The Site, along with Ciba-Geigy's specialty chemicals businesses, were transferred to Ciba Specialty Chemicals Corporation, one of the defendants. Ciba-Geigy has changed its name to Novartis, which is the other defendant.

Products made at the Site included pigments, organic dyestuffs and epoxy resins. Manufacturing operations ceased at the Site in 1996.

In 1983, EPA listed the site on the Superfund National Priorities List of the country's most severely polluted sites, and the agency has been performing investigations and related cleanup actions since then. A groundwater extraction and recharge system is currently in operation at the Site under a prior consent decree with the United States. The corporations are also required under the consent decree lodged today to optimize that groundwater remedy.

The proposed consent decree filed today is subject to a 30-day public comment period and final court approval.

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